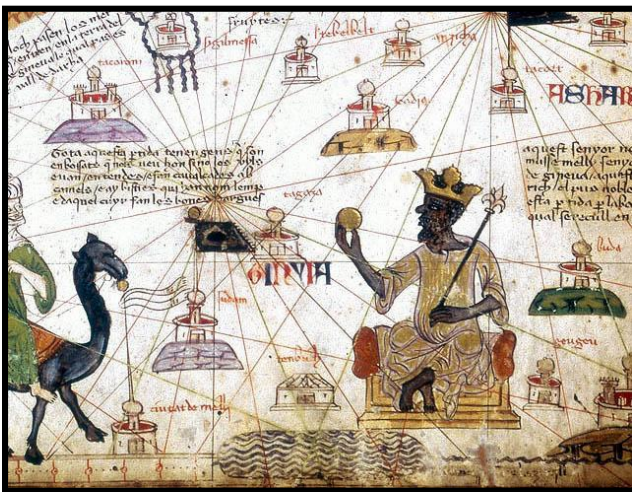
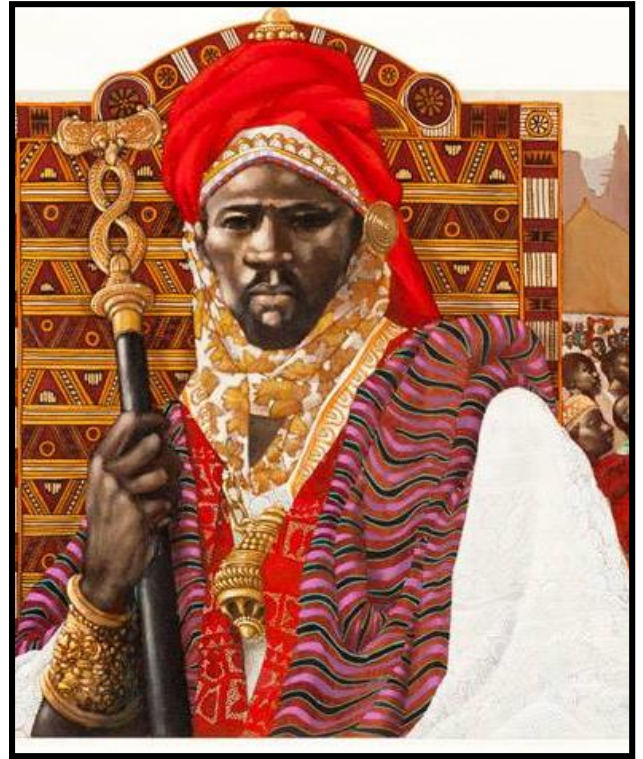


## Mansa Musa I of Mali – the richest person in all history

When we think of the world's all-time richest people, names like Bill Gates or Warren Buffet come to mind.

But few would think of Mansa Musa I of Mali – the 14th century African king who was named the richest person in all history, based on a new study that has produced an **inflation**-adjusted list of the richest people of all time. With a fortune of \$400 billion, Mansa Musa I would have been much richer than the world's current richest man, Bill Gates, who ranks 12<sup>th</sup> with a relatively **paltry** \$78 billion. The list uses the annual 2199.6 per cent rate of inflation to adjust historic fortunes – a formula that means \$100 million in 1913 would equal approximately \$2.3 billion today.

Mansa Musa I ruled West Africa's Mali Empire in the early 1300s, making his fortune by **exploiting** his country's salt and gold production. Many mosques he built as a young man still stand today. In 1324, he made a pilgrimage to Mecca, called a "hajj". He was accompanied by 60,000 people. His enormous caravan included 80 camels, each carrying 300 pounds of pure gold. In addition, 500 servants each carried 6 pounds of gold.



Few kings had the ability to display such wealth, and Mansa Musa made such an impression that for centuries, he was seen as a symbol of wealth and power. When he returned to Timbuktu, he brought back many scholars, architects, artists, and engineers who helped make Timbuktu a great center of learning and the arts.

His picture was often included on maps of Africa, because to people around the world, this legendary king symbolized the entire continent.

After Mansa Musa's death in 1331, however, his **heirs** were unable to hang on to the fortune, and it was substantially **depleted** by civil wars and invading armies.

Write a bold, underlined word next to each synonym

Synonym/Definition	<b><u>Word from reading</u></b>
1. Used up	
2. developing	
3. Price increases	
4. Insignificant; unimportant	
5. inheritors	

6. How did Mansa Musa become so wealthy?

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7. How did Mansa Musa improve Timbuktu?

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### **Math Challenge**

Determine the value of the gold that Mansa Musa took to Mecca.

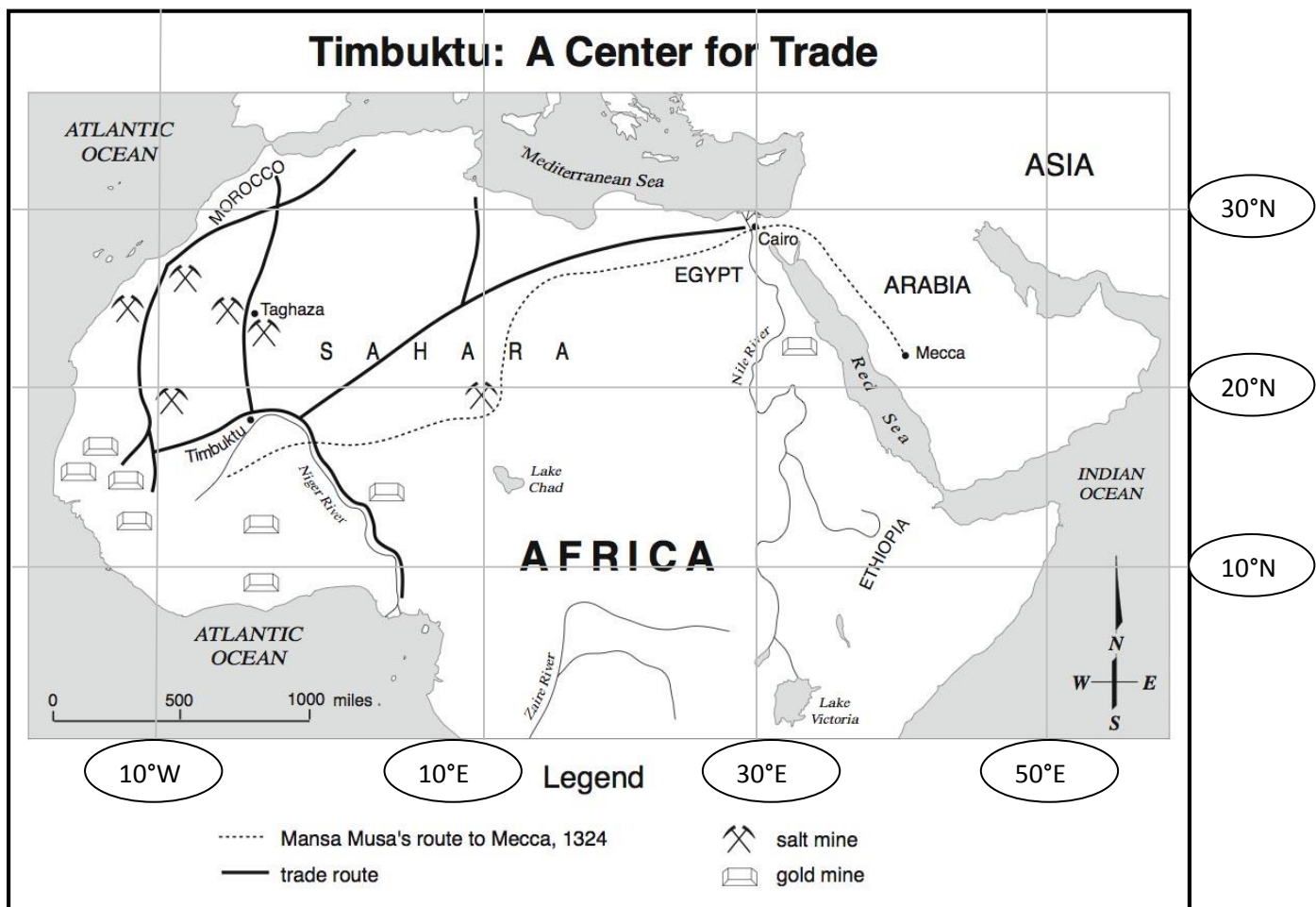
Google  
the price  
of gold.

Convert  
to  
pounds

Figure out how  
many pounds  
Mansa Musa  
took to Mecca.

**Do the Math**  
(price per pound)  
X  
(number of pounds)

**ANSWER**



- About how far did Mansa Musa travel on his Hajj? \_\_\_\_\_
- What products were moved on the trade routes in North Africa? \_\_\_\_\_ & \_\_\_\_\_
- What body of water would have been most useful to the traders of Timbuktu? \_\_\_\_\_  
Why? \_\_\_\_\_
- Which Theme of Geography does this map best represent? \_\_\_\_\_
- Which direction does the Niger River flow? \_\_\_\_\_  
How do you know? \_\_\_\_\_
- Which is the best estimate for the absolute location of Timbuktu? (17°N, 4°W) or (23°N, 4°W)
- Which is the best estimate for the absolute location of Mecca? (22°N, 41°E) or (18°N, 41°E)
- What is the absolute location of Cairo \_\_\_\_\_°N, \_\_\_\_\_°S
- What is the absolute location of Lake Chad? \_\_\_\_\_°N, \_\_\_\_\_°S
- Mecca is (SW, NW, NE, SE) of Cairo.